

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 1-3 and 5-6, and add new claims 8-14 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage, in which a rental storage user uses the rental storage provided by a storage provider or a network and said rental storage user and said storage provider communicate with respect to ~~the~~ rental storage service, comprising the steps of:
  - using storage of said storage provider by the rental storage user;
  - providing by the ~~rental~~ storage ~~service~~ provider ~~the~~ estimation of a data amount in the rental storage for future storage usage of said rental storage ~~service~~ user, based on the history of storage usage of said rental storage ~~service~~ user; and
  - reporting the estimation to said storage user.
2. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage, in which a rental storage service user uses the rental storage provided by a rental storage service provider on a network and said rental storage service user and said rental storage service provider communicate with respect to ~~the~~ rental storage service, comprising the steps of:
  - making a contract between said rental storage service provider and said rental storage service user so as to configure ~~the~~ contract options based on the contract of use of storage service;
  - using ~~the~~ storage of said rental storage service provider by the rental storage service user;
  - reporting ~~the~~ a charge to the rental storage service user by the rental storage service provider;
  - paying the charge for the use of said storage by the rental storage service user to the rental storage service provider;
  - reporting the history of storage usage record and ~~the~~ an estimated amount of data of storage usage to the rental storage service user from the rental storage service provider; and
  - reconfiguring said contract options by said rental storage service provider.

3. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage, in which a rental storage service user uses the rental storage provided by a rental storage service provider on a network and said rental storage service user and said rental storage service provider communicate with respect to the rental storage service, comprising the steps of:
- when said rental storage service provider and said rental storage service user make a contract and the contract options based on the contract of use of said storage specifies a charge system for the contracted amount of data according to the predetermined usage[.,,];
- estimating by said rental storage service provider ~~the~~ amount of data of storage usage in the future based on the history of amount of data of storage usage by said rental storage service user;
- proposing to said rental storage service user a recommended contract on ~~the~~ an amount of data according to the estimation.
4. (Original) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 3, in which: the step of proposing to said rental storage service user a recommended contract on the amount of data include the substep of: proposing reduction of amount of data contracted for the storage usage if the storage usage estimated is less than the currently contracted storage usage.
5. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 3, in which:
- when said rental storage service user updates said contract options in accordance with ~~the~~ a desirable amount of data of storage usage ~~of storage~~ recommended by said rental storage service provider,
- if the amount of data of storage usage by said rental storage service user exceeds the contracted amount of data for storage usage reconfigured within the contract period of the contract,
- said rental storage service user will be allowed using the storage service for the data beyond the contracted amount of said storage usage.
6. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 2, further

comprising the steps of:

proposing by said rental storage service provider a reduction plan of the amount of data of storage usage used by said rental storage service user; and

reducing the amount of data of storage usage used by said rental storage service user in accordance with the recommended reduction plan of data[[]],

wherein prior to the step of reconfiguring said contract options is performed after the step of proposing by said rental storage service provider and the step of reducing the amount of data of storage usage used by said rental storage service user.

7. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 6, in which: when said rental storage service user deletes data in use in accordance with the recommended reduction plan of the amount of data of storage usage, said rental storage service provider duplicates on a portable medium a backup copy of the data specified to delete by said rental storage service user; and said rental storage service provider sends the backup copy of the data to the rental storage service user.
8. (New) A rental storage service system in which the rental storage service users uses the rental storage provided by the rental storage service provider through the network and the rental storage service provider communicate with respect to rental storage service, the system comprising:
  - a user information processing unit for configuring the information of the rental storage service user;
  - a data aggregation unit for aggregating data storage usage of the rental storage by the rental storage service user;
  - a usage estimation unit for estimating future data storage usage by the rental storage service user;
  - a billing unit for billing the data storage usage to the rental storage service user;
  - a reporting unit for reporting any necessary information to the rental storage service user; and
  - a data access processing unit for storage data access, wherein the user information processing unit records configuration of the information

of the rental storage service user into a user management file,

the data aggregation unit records history of data storage usage of the rental storage by the rental storage service user in a data record file,

the usage estimation unit records estimated future data storage usage into a data estimation file, and

the data access processing unit records data access information of the rental storage.

9. (New) A rental storage system set forth in Claim 8, wherein the reporting unit has means for displaying the history of data storage usage recorded by amount of the data usage aggregation unit together with the future data storage usage estimated by the data estimation unit on one single display screen.
10. (New) A rental storage system set forth in Claim 8, wherein the reporting unit has means for displaying billing records processed by the billing unit and an estimated billing charge based upon the estimated future data storage usage one single display screen.
11. (New) A rental storage system set forth in Claim 8, wherein the reporting unit has means for displaying on one single display screen a list of suggested options for reducing data storage usage by the rental storage service user together with respective configuration fields of the options.
12. (New) A rental storage system set forth in Claim 8, further comprising:
  - a server; and
  - disk storage subsystems, wherein
    - the disk subsystems include the user information processing unit, the data aggregation unit, the data estimation unit, and the billing unit, and
    - an estimated storage usage of each of the disk subsystems is calculated which is then aggregated into an estimated storage usage of the system.
13. (New) A rental storage system set forth in Claim 8, further comprising:

a server; and  
disk storage subsystems, wherein  
the server included the user information processing unit, the data aggregation unit, the data estimation unit, and the billing unit, and  
an estimated storage usage of the system is calculated by the server based on the storage usage reported from the disk subsystems.

14. (New) A rental storage system set forth in Claim 8, further comprising:  
means for reporting to an administrator if the future data storage usage of the rental storage estimated for a predetermined period of time exceeds a storage capacity of the system.